

July 24, 2015

Mr. Charles Sullivan
Executive Director
Cambridge Historical Commission
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Charlie,

The Cambridge Historical Commission has requested that MIT and the Commission develop a written protocol with respect to the review of the Institute's properties listed on the State Register of Historic Places and the Kendall Square Landmark Group (236 Main Street, 264 Main Street and 292 Main Street). MIT and the Commission staff have had a long standing informal review process whereby MIT has consulted with the staff on alterations and repairs to buildings that have been listed on the State Register of Historic Places. This letter is intended to formalize this arrangement and conclude the landmark designation study of the Kendall Square Landmark Group.

I have attached a map of the properties that we understand are of particular interest to the Commission as they are listed on the State Register of Historic Places or they are one of the three buildings in the proposed Kendall Square Landmark Group. MIT would agree to the continued staff review of all major modifications to the properties on the attached map and we would agree to refer all matters requiring resolution to the Commission. MIT appreciates having the list as a planning tool and we also appreciate being able to utilize the expertise available at the Commission as we renew and restore our historic campus.

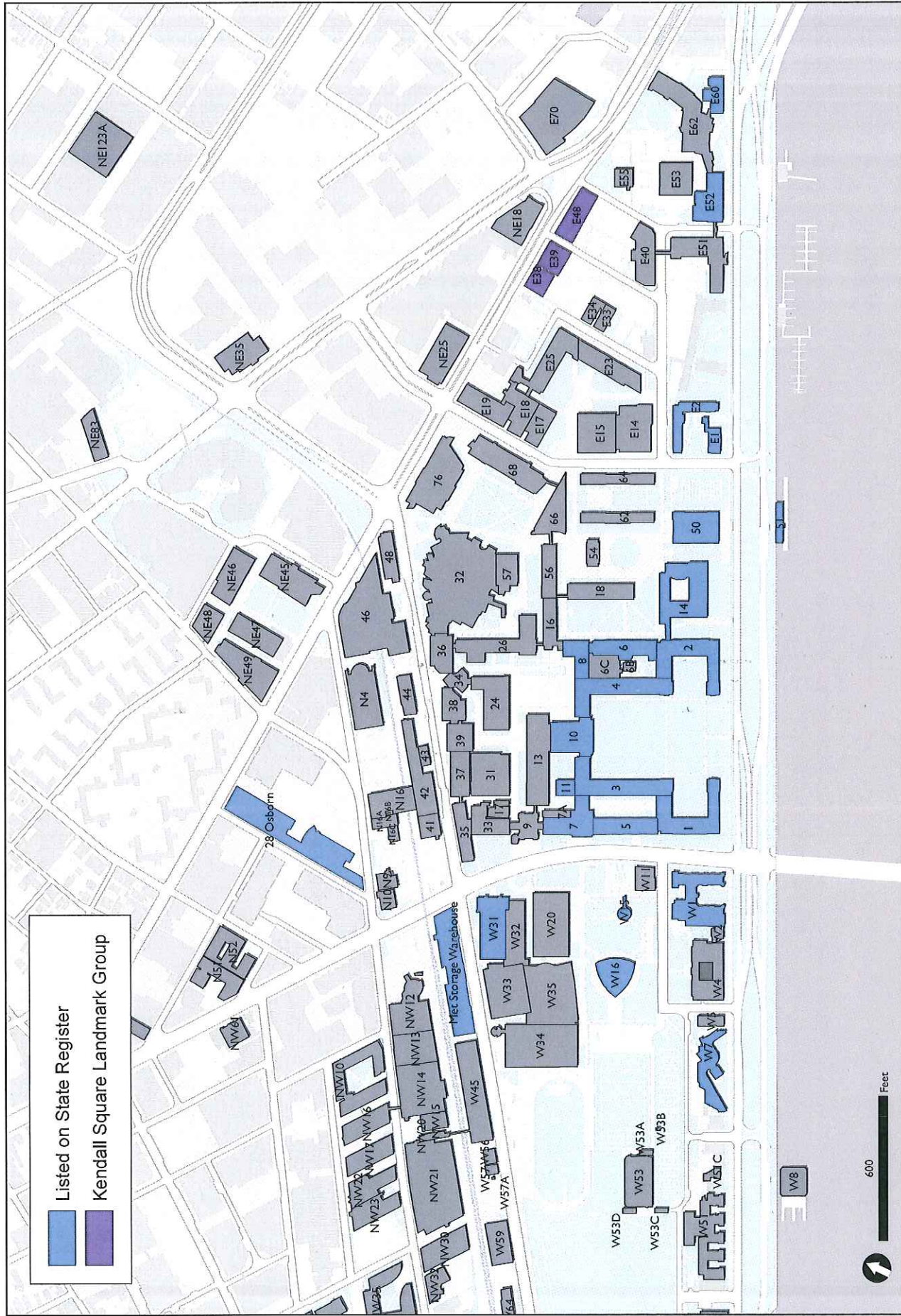
As the owner of many buildings with architectural and historical significance, MIT acknowledges its responsibility to address our shared desire to protect and honor the heritage of Cambridge. Although the Institute has many competing demands in keeping the campus current and useful to fulfill its mission of education, cutting edge research and innovation, we recognize historic preservation as an important and valued priority as the MIT campus continues to change and evolve over time.

We would appreciate a letter from the Commission confirming this agreement and also that the Cambridge Historical Commission does not foresee designation of local landmarks, historic districts or conservation districts for the properties included in this agreement. We look forward to continuing our partnership with the Commission.

Sincerely,

Israel Ruiz
Executive Vice President and Treasurer
Attachment





Sources: Office of Campus Planning
 Basemap: Facility Information Systems (2015)

MIT Historic Resources for Consultation with CHC

MIT Office of Campus Planning
 July 2015



CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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August x, 2015

Israel Ruiz, Executive Vice President and Treasurer
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
77 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Mr. Ruiz:

This letter responds to your July 24, 2015 letter to Charles Sullivan, Executive Director of the Cambridge Historical Commission, relative to the request made by the Commission that MIT and the Commission develop a written protocol for Commission staff review of major changes that the Institute proposes for its properties that are listed on or considered eligible for listing on the State Register of Historic Places as well as the buildings numbered 236, 264 and 292 Main Street, collectively known the "Kendall Square Landmark Group."

The impetus for a written protocol stems from a variety of factors including the Historical Commission's responsibilities under state statutes and city ordinances, the Institute's evolving needs and programs, and the healthy degree of staff-level collaboration that has developed over several decades between the Institute and the Commission concerning various properties that have important associations with the City's past. That collaboration has been particularly noteworthy during the development of the Kendall Square Master Plan, which includes the buildings in the Kendall Square Landmark Group that the Commission has determined eligible for designation by the City Council as landmarks.

The discussions between the Institute and the Commission have resulted in proposals for integrating the buildings in the Kendall Square Landmark Group into the Master Plan with modifications to be reviewed by CHC staff to retrofit those buildings in a way that maintains their historic appearance, scale, and architectural integrity. The Commission is aware that the Master Plan also contemplates the demolition in a few years of Eastgate, which would then be over 50 years old and would likely be considered "significant" under the City's Demolition Delay Ordinance, but recognizes that the Institute's commitment for preservation and adaptive reuse of the Kendall Square Landmark Group mitigates the potential demolition of that building.

The Commission is concerned that the limited number of properties proposed for consideration under this protocol does not represent current thinking about the significance of buildings on the MIT campus and in the surrounding areas. The Institute's buildings were originally nominated to the National Register in 1978. Significant industrial buildings identified by the Institute's consultants in 2002, for example, are not included. We understand that the Institute is prepared to resume an architectural survey of other MIT-owned buildings as to their eligibility for State Register listing, and that in future the protocol would also apply to buildings that the Institute and the Commission agree would meet this level of significance.

At a meeting of the Cambridge Historical Commission on _____, 2015, the terms of the protocol summarized in the Institute's letter and in this response, including the commitment to make a further study of significance of other MIT-owned buildings and to have the protocol apply to those found to be eligible for State Register listing, were supported in recognition of the City's interest in having the commitment of the Institute to consider the architectural and historical significance of its properties as it adapts and fulfills its changing needs. The Commission believes that its preservation goals for the Kendall Square Landmark Group will be satisfied by the proposals in MIT's Kendall Square Master Plan and continuing Commission staff input into the implementation of the adaptive reuse of the buildings involved, without the need for formal landmark designation. The Institute's commitment to review with the Commission staff further major changes to its other existing and eligible State Register listed properties was a specifically identified factor in the Commission's decision.

For its part, while the current members of the Commission can neither bind their successors nor ignore the Commission's responsibility to protect significant buildings and areas that are threatened by development or unacceptable change, the Commission affirms that it does not foresee designation of local landmarks or establishment of historic district or neighborhood conservation district status for the properties that are or become subject to the protocol. We trust our staff's experience and expertise in working with the Institute and appreciate the Institute's agreement to refer matters requiring resolution to the full Commission.

Sincerely,

William B. King, Chair